

***Polistichus connexus* Fourc. (Col.: Carabidae) at light in suburban West Kent**

Four specimens of this very local uncommon ground beetle flew to my m.v. lamp on the warm night of 3rd August 1990 — a most unexpected and remarkable occurrence. Its British headquarters used to be the Isle of Sheppey, where it was occasionally plentiful during the last century (cf. Fowler, *Col. Brit. Isl.* 1: 147); but its recorded range extends from Dorset to Norfolk, chiefly on and near the coast. I have seen no published record of *Polistichus* for West Kent, but have myself taken it in the extreme east of the vice-county: Isle of Grain, May 1935, two in different spots under stones in a pasture field. Nor have I heard of recent finds in the Thames Estuary area, but it has occurred on the coast of East Sussex in later years. The sole inland county from which it is known is Berkshire: Donisthorpe (1939, *Pre. List Col. Windsor Forest*: 20), records two from roots of elm trees (14.v.24), and I have found odd specimens there (the Great Park) from time to time in the late 1930s and 40s in similar situations, but never since.

One may speculate on the origin of the Charlton beetles. As far as we know, the only previous capture anywhere near London was of a single individual on the Chingford side edge of Epping Forest by the late H.W. Forster in the 1940s (I believe, unpublished) — possibly a straggler from the Essex coast. The occurrence of four examples is evidence of local breeding. There are, indeed, certain restricted spots on the south bank of the Thames a good two miles distant where a colony might conceivably exist; being difficult of access, they are perhaps sufficiently undisturbed. It is hard to imagine *P. connexus* flourishing, in present conditions, at any nearer site. Has it, then, spread up the Thames from the estuary region in very recent years? Or has it always been present in my area but never seen until now? Or has it just established itself in one of the parks at Charlton (and if so, how?), as it did in Windsor Park for a time? All three alternatives seem about equally implausible. — A.A. ALLEN, 49 Montcalm Road, Charlton, London SE) 7QG.

***Metoecus paradoxus* L. (Col.: Rhipiphoridae) in London (Middlesex).**

I found a moribund male of this widely distributed but rarely encountered beetle on my garden path on 14th August 1990. There are no subterranean wasps' nests in the immediate vicinity though several neighbours have nests in their lofts. Mr A.A. Allen's notes (1984, *Ent. Rec.* 96: 184; *ibid.* 100: 93) suggest that the nearest to London the beetle had previously been recorded was by Mr Ford from his loft in Bexleyheath, Kent. The same record confirms Fowler & Donisthorpe's finding (1913, *Coleoptera of the British Islands* 6: 299) that the beetle is not confined to subterranean wasps' nests as even recent standard works of reference still suggest. — K.G.V. SMITH, 70 Hollickwood Avenue, London N12 0LT.